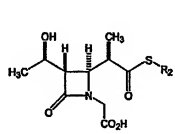
**In the Abstract**

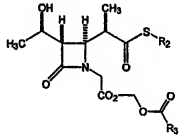
Amend the Abstract as follows:

The present invention provides a novel intermediate represented by formula (1), (3), or (4) for efficiently producing a 1β-methylcarbapenem compound for oral administration, and a process for producing the intermediate. That is, the present invention provides a process for producing a novel β-lactam compound represented by formula (4), the process including allowing a β-lactam compound represented by formula (5) as a starting material to react with a compound represented by formula (6) in the presence of a base to obtain a novel β-lactam compound represented by formula (1), protecting the hydroxyl group, subsequently performing cyclization in the presence of a strong base, allowing the cyclized compound to react with diphenylphosphoryl chloride to obtain a novel β-lactam compound represented by formula (3), and eliminating the protecting group therefrom. The formulae referred to are diagrammed as follows:

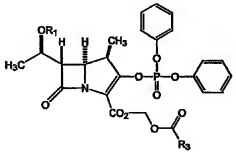


(5)

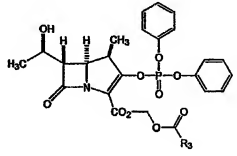
(6)



(1)



(3)



(4)

(In the formulae, $R_1$ represents a trimethylsilyl group or a triethylsilyl group; $R_2$ represents an aryl group or a heteroaryl group; $R_2$ represents an aryl group or a heteroaryl group; $R_3$ represents an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms or a cycloalkyl group having 3 to 10 carbon atoms; and X represents a halogen atom.)